DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 045 083 JC 710 011

TITLE	A Plan for the Organization of the Instructional Staff at Oakton Community College.
INSTITUTION	Oakton Community Coll., Morton Grove, Ill.
PUB DATE	Jan 71
NOTE	7p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.45
DESCRIPTORS	Administrative Organization, Coordination, Faculty, *Faculty Organizations, *Instructional Staff, *Junior Colleges, Mergers, *Organization, Power Structure, *School Organization, Staff Improvement, Staff Utilization

ABSTRACT

As Oakton Community College (Illinois) grows larger, so do its problems of control--record keeping, budgetary evaluations, and housekeeping. To solve these problems the college has turned its attention to organization below the level of the administrative council and staff positions. Of three alternatives, further refining the organization of existing faculty and staff with provision for the next and succeeding years was found to be the most desirable. It has been proposed that faculty be organized into groups (no more than 30 per group) without specific regard for curriculum, course, or discipline; these faculty "clusters" would then include individuals with specific and general teaching and administrative strengths. Key faculty members would be selected to head these clusters according to their versatility and ability to recognize and encourage different modes of instruction, commitment to student learning, and ability to foster cooperation with other faculty members. Students are then assigned to the clusters, first arbitrarily and then specifically according to their majors, interests, and needs. The result will be a "college within a college." The greatest advantage of such an organization is that the diversity of talents within a cluster will enable the faculty to concentrate on student learning rather than on subject matter. (CA)

ED 045083

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

OAKTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Morton Grove, Illinois

January 1971

JC 710 011

A Plan for the Organization of the Instructional Staff at Oakton Community College

In the recruiting brochure published last winter, Dr. Koehnline wrote the following:

"Under the Dean of Faculties there will be 5 or 6 groupings of professionals directly concerned with the learning process. Although comparable in some respects to traditional departments or broader divisions, these groupings will be easily distinguished from more common administrative units."

This is a principle we have held in mind through our formative months. During that time the Administrative Council (with invaluable help from directors and the classified staff) has formed and operated the educational program at Oakton Community College. We believed and believe that creation of administrative or quasi-administrative positions below the level of the Administrative Council was undesirable during the summer and during our first semester of operation. However, it is my contention that organization below the level of Administrative Council and Staff positions (i.e., Directors) at Oakton Community College is a matter we must turn our attentions toward--and now. Our numbers are growing and will continue to do so. This presents problems of control--budgetary, evaluative, housekeeping, and record keeping. We have several alternatives as I see it:

1. Increase Staff positions to a point where we have adequate "specialists" to isolate, study, and solve problems and perform functions we don't always have time for. This, of course, has the disadvantage of creating a top-heavy administration.

2. Hire consultants to do the above. The disadvantage here is the rather high cost, and availability of the consultants for only certain periods of time.

3. Refine further the organization of our existing faculty and staff with provision for next year and succeeding years.

Option number 3 is, I think, the most desirable.

1. It puts control and responsibility into the hands of faculty rather than centralizing such functions in completely non-teaching administration.

2. It makes use of existing talent for this year and gives us a structure for recruiting for next year.

3. It avoids the inevitable demoralizing effect of picking "outsiders" for leadership roles--either this year or next year.

The question of "refinement" therefore. The Administrative Council discussed the merits, etc., of some kind of "house plan" at an all-day meeting on December 3, 1970. It does not seem necessary to restate all of our objections to departmental or divisional organization . (Some of these are shown on Charts I and II.) Suffice it to say that nearly all such plans are based on subject matter and result in structures which group according to what people teach, not how they teach. Neither do such structures exist primarily for the purpose of facilitating learning. (Incidentally, the recently published Priorities in Higher Education by the President's Task Force on Higher Education recommends attention be given to "rigidities in departmental...organization...." p. 15.)

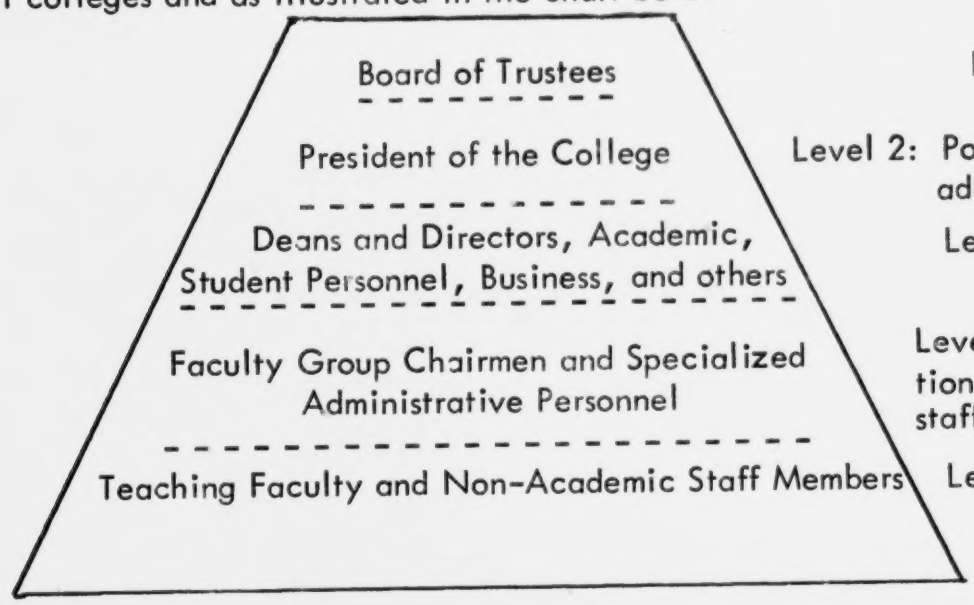
I think we should organize our faculty administratively, both now and in the future, into groups without specific regard for curriculum, course, or discipline. Such groups should include individuals with both specific and general teaching and administrative strengths. Thus, each group should have an individual or individuals whose methods of teaching represents a special way of facilitating learning (i.e., lecture/discussion, laboratory, auto-tutorial, etc.) Further, each group should have within it "experts" in audio-visual, in graphics, in reading. Key faculty members should be selected to head these groups or clusters (which should not number more than thirty teachers per group during the next five years). These leaders should be selected on the basis of their commitment to student learning, their versatility and ability to recognize and encourage different modes of instruction, and their leadership qualities necessary to foster cooperation and coordination among diverse faculty. But more about these leaders later.

What advantages do such groupings as we are suggesting have that are lacking in the more traditional kinds of collegiate structure? I think there are many advantages, but chiefly the virtue that this kind of "cluster" arrangement has over departments (which result in compartments) and divisions (which divide from the rest of the school) is that the diversity of talents within a cluster enables faculty to concentrate on student learning rather than subject matter. The membership of each cluster is small enough to enable its leader or chairman to maintain effective administrative control and broad enough to include many kinds of academic talents. Teachers are grouped for their diversity more than for their sameness. The attached charts illustrate several of these advantages and disadvantages (again see Charts I and II).

Dr. Koehnline has suggested that students be assigned, first arbitrarily by computer and then refined by concern for their major curricular interest, personal needs, etc., to groups (i.e., computer aided by S.D.F.). This would give students an identity with a faculty group within the total college and, I think, foster a type of school spirit more genuine and useful to the student than within the traditional sports oriented syndrome. This idea should be phased in over the next year.

As for the faculty organization, I recommend regrouping faculty beginning the first of February. I recommend three groups for the remainder of academic 1970-71. I suggest that if this plan is adopted, each chairman be given a reduced load of two courses for the spring semester, extended contract with no teaching during the summer, and a one-course load during 1971-72. These individuals would retain faculty rank.

These "faculties" or faculty groups will function at the implementation level, as in all colleges and as illustrated in the chart below:


Board of Trustees
President of the College
Deans and Directors, Academic, Student Personnel, Business, and others
Faculty Group Chairmen and Specialized Administrative Personnel
Teaching Faculty and Non-Academic Staff Members
Level 1: Policy-making
Level 2: Policy recommendations & admin. implementation
Level 3: Administrative implementation
Level 4: Program implementation & services to faculty, staff, and students
Level 5: Direct program implementation

[Chart devised from one suggested in Blocker, et al, The Two-Year College: A Social Synthesis, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1965.]

The difference between "faculties" here and at most community colleges, however, is that in our plan they will be grouped so as to constitute a kind of "college within a college," a number of diverse people whose single most important commonality is that they are teachers (moreso literally than professors) seeking to cause learning in their students. Within the groups of 30 or less, they can work closely and individually with students assigned to their group in devising instructional methods most suited to the student's learning mode and his curricular or occupational aim. (Naturally there will be students taking some classes taught by instructors outside the assigned group and there will be need to "transfer" students among groups from time to time.) It will be the group chairman's function to coordinate and supervise, keeping in mind the over-all role and purpose of the college.

It is our intent to recommend three faculty members for positions as Group Chairmen at the January 19 Board Meeting. Chart III is a suggested job description which provides a reasonable idea of not only his responsibilities but also those of the faculty cluster. It should be made clear at this juncture, however, that Group Chairmen will not perform any faculty evaluation for purposes of promotion or salary increment during the current academic year. Chairmen will assume responsibilities in this area beginning with the 1971-72 school year. For the remainder of this school year faculty evaluation will be carried out by the Dean of Faculties in consultation with the Administrative Council.

Needless to say, as we grow larger there will be need to amplify, alter, and make adaptations to this plan. I make no claim to its being a paragon, but it may well become a paradigm within our profession. There will be need for many programs and more subjects within our college. There is no reason that the "courses," taught both within the walls of classrooms and laboratories and without them cannot fit well within this structure. Neither is there necessity to assume that, given a program in air conditioning, or transportation, or electrical technology, the coordinators, teachers, and students cannot function as well or better within our structure. For it is, to repeat once more, toward the goal of student learning and the "human potential model" that we must aim Oakton Community College. We must not forget or ignore the subject areas we were trained in, but neither should we make them the focus of our own concepts of educational organization.

.....

"The wonder is, when you think about it, how long our schools have managed to stay the same." -- George B. Leonard, Education and Ecstasy, New York, 1968.

.....

CHART I

CONCERNS OF A COLLEGE AND EFFECT OF TWO KINDS OF STRUCTURE ON THEIR RESOLUTION

	Department or Division	Faculty Clusters
Size of Administrative Sub-structure:	Disproportionate due to nature of disciplines (e.g. groups with required subjects such as English will inevitably be larger than others).	Size can be kept the same or nearly the same.
Purpose of the Group in relation to the College as a whole:	At odds often, due to competition for budget, desire to "champion" particular disciplines (e.g. "Science is more vital than art," etc.), undue concern for "standards" stemming from academic pride, often resulting in less concern for the individual student.	More likely to be in concert with the college goals because no single academic interest dominates; indeed subject interests are relegated to secondary position (although hardly out of sight) behind student learning.
Identity - College, Faculty, Students:	Identity is first with the faculty group because of likeness of subject areas and training and second with students and the whole college.	Identity less likely to be with faculty group <u>as</u> subject matter colleagues. There will be faculty group identity but it is likely to be spread outward to the students and to other groups and the administration.
Counselling:	Counsellors tend to "push" disciplines within the unit, if they are assigned to it. If they are <u>not</u> assigned to dept./division, they are often out of touch with faculty.	Counsellors would be assigned to each cluster, making for decentralized advising. Since each cluster represents diverse rather than similar people and subjects, counsellors can focus on individual students rather than subject oriented division.
Budgeting:	Unhealthy competition often occurs when disciplines vie with one another for money. Teachers in subject areas are unaware of needs of faculty in other fields.	Since essentially same needs exist within each group, much unnecessary competition eliminated. Where special needs exist (as in capital expenditures in, say technology, specialists in the field can get together, regardless of what teaching group they are in, and resolve problems.

CHART II

RELATIVE ADVANTAGES - DISADVANTAGES OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF FACULTY GROUPING

Divisions/Departments

. Group by like subjects
(e.g. Science or Chemistry)
. Emphasis on the academic discipline

advantage	disadvantage
1. members more "like-minded"	1. lack of objectivity; less exposure to "different" faculty
2. efficiency because of singleness of purpose	2. "empire building"; "tendency to lose sight of the "whole college"
3. budgeting simplified due to similarity of disciplines within group	3. unnecessary competition among groups to the detriment of the "whole" college
4. evaluation of instruction (usually) done by a chairman quite familiar with subjects being taught	4. tendency of evaluation to focus primarily on instructor's "knowledge" rather than student learning

Clusters

. Group by teaching styles
. (e.g. lecture/discussion - auto-tutorial, etc.)
.Emphasis on student learning

advantage	disadvantage
1. diversity fosters exchange of different points of view	1. potential aimlessness due to such diversity
2. inability to focus with much competence on problems of subject matter causes focus to be on method and on student learning	2. difficulty in group solving problems relating to only one specialized subject area within the cluster Such problem solving might have to be accomplishedat a higher level
3. budgeting function becomes more one of co-ordinating needs of the group than championing needs. People outside particular disciplinary area able to see and participate in others' peculiar problems	3. again certain difficulty budgeting due to diversity of people involved. Chairman co-ordinates and moderates, however. Admin. council ultimately decides
4. chairman, especially because he is not intimately familiar with subject matter, evaluates teachniques and results of teaching (i.e. learning)	4. none, unless subject matter. taught is what is being evaluated

CHART III

Job Description
Faculty Group Chairman

Function or Purpose: To co-ordinate and supervise the activities of a faculty group of diverse disciplines with the objective of facilitating and improving student learning.

The Faculty Group Chairman reports directly to the Administrative Council and is responsible for:

1. Improvement in teaching methods to effectuate better student learning

2. Evaluation of teaching effectiveness

3. In co-ordination with other Group Chairmen and the Deans of Faculties and Student Personnel Service, development and conduct of in-service education programs

4. Expansion of existing curricula and, with the Dean of Faculties and the Director of Curriculum Development, development of new curricula

5. Recruitment of prospective faculty and recommendations concerning employment

6. Budgetary development and cost control

7. Record keeping

8. Course scheduling and faculty teaching assignments

9. With the Dean of Student Personnel Services, development and supervision of effective student counselling services

General: Group Chairmen will have teaching loads not to exceed two courses. During 1971-72, chairmen will teach at least one course per semester but no courses during summer session. Chairmen will retain faculty rank and will have twelve-month employment contracts.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JAN 20 1971

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION